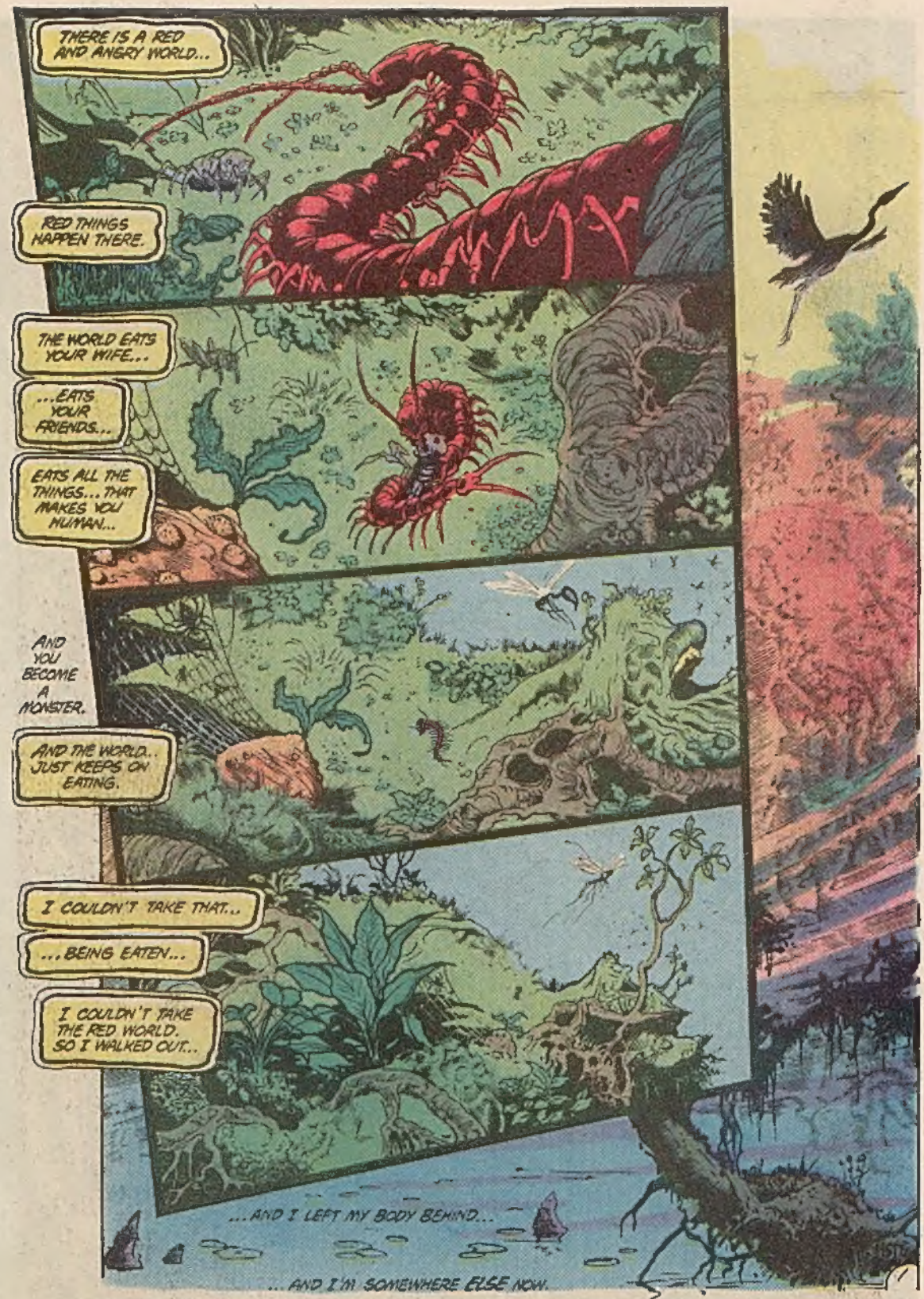
DC
The SAGA of The
SWAMP THING
23
75¢
CAN 95¢
U.K. 30p
APR. 84
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
THE NEW DC.
THERE'S NO
STOPPING US NOW.


THERE IS A RED AND ANGRY WORLD...
RED THINGS HAPPEN THERE.
THE WORLD EATS YOUR WIFE...
...EATS YOUR FRIENDS...
EATS ALL THE THINGS... THAT MAKES YOU HUMAN...
AND YOU BECOME A MONSTER.
AND THE WORLD.. JUST KEEPS ON EATING.
I COULDN'T TAKE THAT...
...BEING EATEN...
I COULDN'T TAKE THE RED WORLD. SO I WALKED OUT...
...AND I LEFT MY BODY BEHIND...
...AND I'M SOMEWHERE ELSE NOW.

THE SAGA OF SWAMP THING 23 Published monthly by DC Comics Inc., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to DC Comics Inc., Subscription Dept., PO Box 1306-F, Fort Lee, NJ 07024. Annual subscription rate $9.00. Outside USA $10.00. Copyright © 1984 DC Comics Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. Printed in USA. Advertising Representative: Sanford Schwarz & Co., 365 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10017. (212) 391-1400.
DC Comics Inc. A Warner Communications Company

SWAMP THING

CREATED BY LEN WEIN AND BERNI WRIGHTSON

OUR GREEN WORLD

...ALAN MOORE SCRIPT STEPHEN BISSETTE AND JOHN TOTLEBEN: ARTISTS.
LEN WEIN EDITOR/ADAPTATION
ASSISTED BY TATJANA WOOD COLORIST JOHN COSTANZA LETTERER

SOMEWHERE QUIET... SOMEWHERE GREEN AND TIMELESS...

I DRIFT... THE CELLULAR LANDSCAPE STRETCHING BENEATH ME... EERIE... SILENT...

...BEAUTIFUL...

MY AWARENESS... EXPANDING OUT THROUGH THE FORGOTTEN ROOT SYSTEMS...

AM I AT PEACE? AM I... HAPPY?

YES.

OH YES.

AND YET... THERE IS A SENSE...

...A SENSE OF SOMETHING FOREIGN AMONG THE GREEN... SOMETHING WRONG...

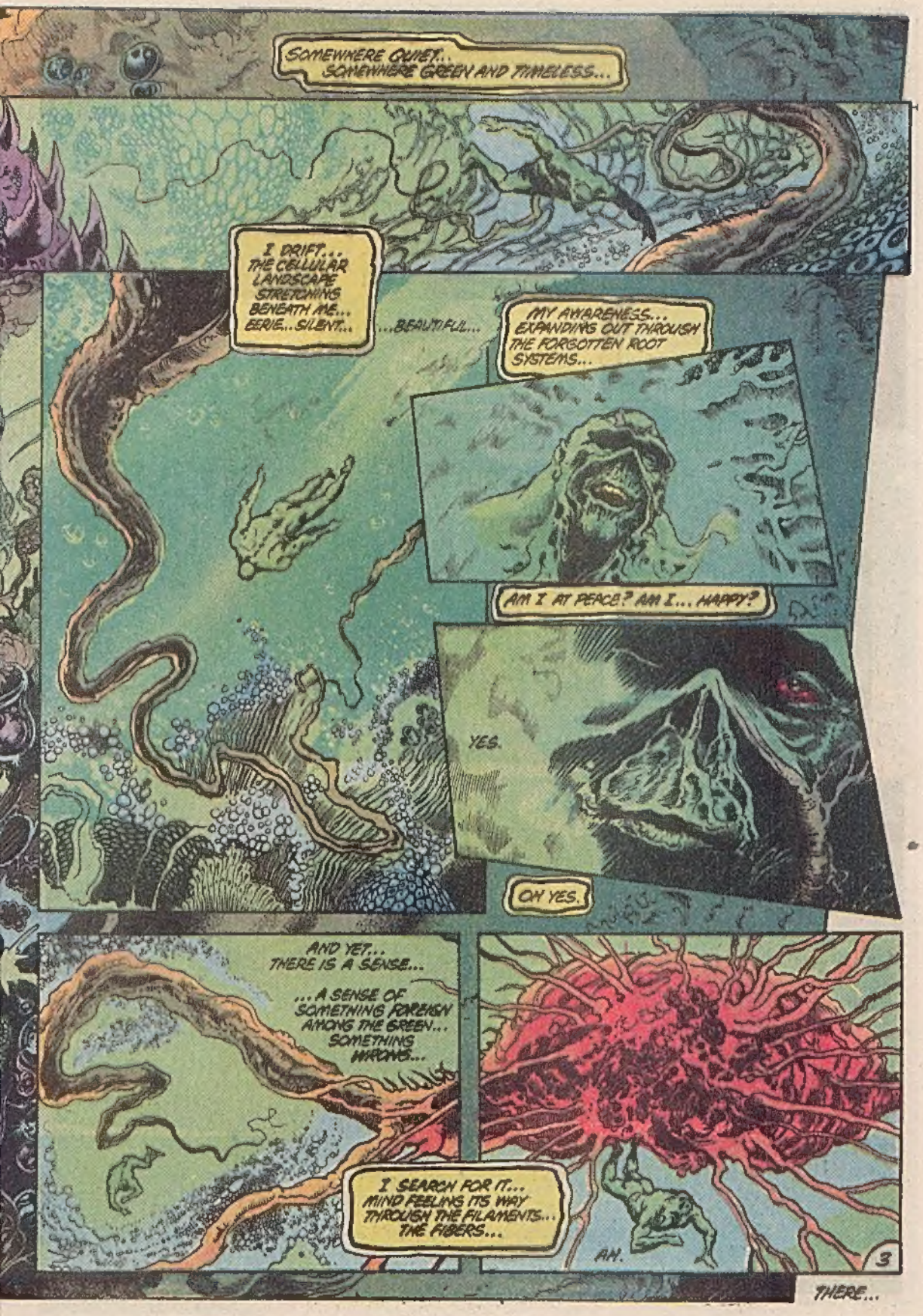
I SEARCH FOR IT... MIND FEELING ITS WAY THROUGH THE FILAMENTS... THE FIBERS...

AH.

3

THERE...

SWAMP THING
CREATED BY LEN WEIN AND BERNI WRIGHTSON
UNDERGREEN WORLD
w/ ALAN MOORE SCRIPT STEPHEN BISSETTE w/c JOHN TOTLEBEN: ARTISTS
LEN WEIN
ASSISTED BY TATJANA WOOD
JOHN COSTANZA LETTERER

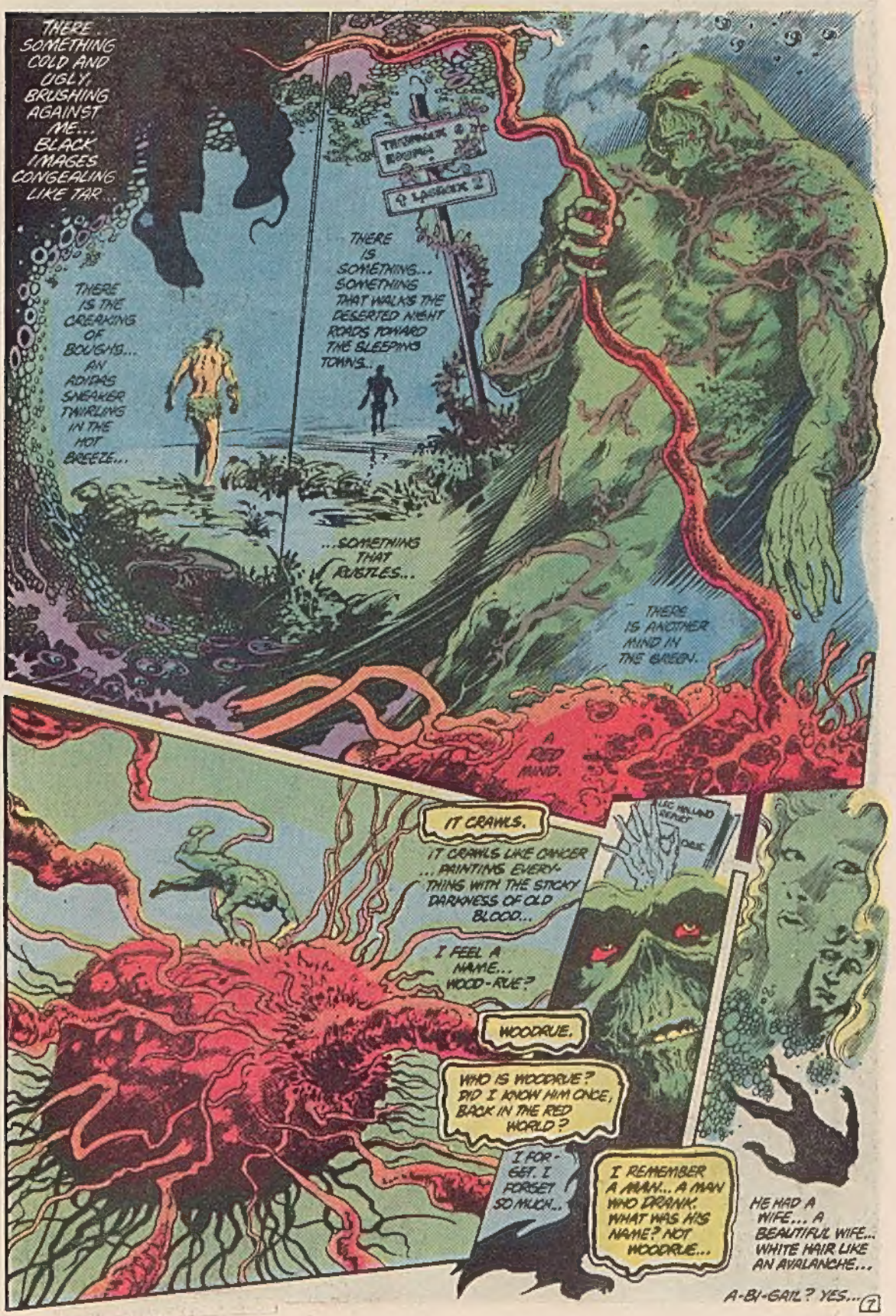

SOMEWHERE QUIET... SOMEWHERE GREEN AND TIMELESS...
I DRIFT... THE CELLULAR LANDSCAPE STRETCHING BENEATH ME... EERIE... SILENT...
...BEAUTIFUL...
MY AWARENESS... EXPANDING OUT THROUGH THE FORGOTTEN ROOT SYSTEMS...
AM I AT PEACE? AM I... HAPPY?
YES.
OH YES.
AND YET... THERE IS A SENSE...
...A SENSE OF SOMETHING FOREIGN AMONG THE GREEN... SOMETHING WRONG...
I SEARCH FOR IT... MIND FEELING ITS WAY THROUGH THE FILAMENTS... THE FIBERS...
AH.
3
THERE...

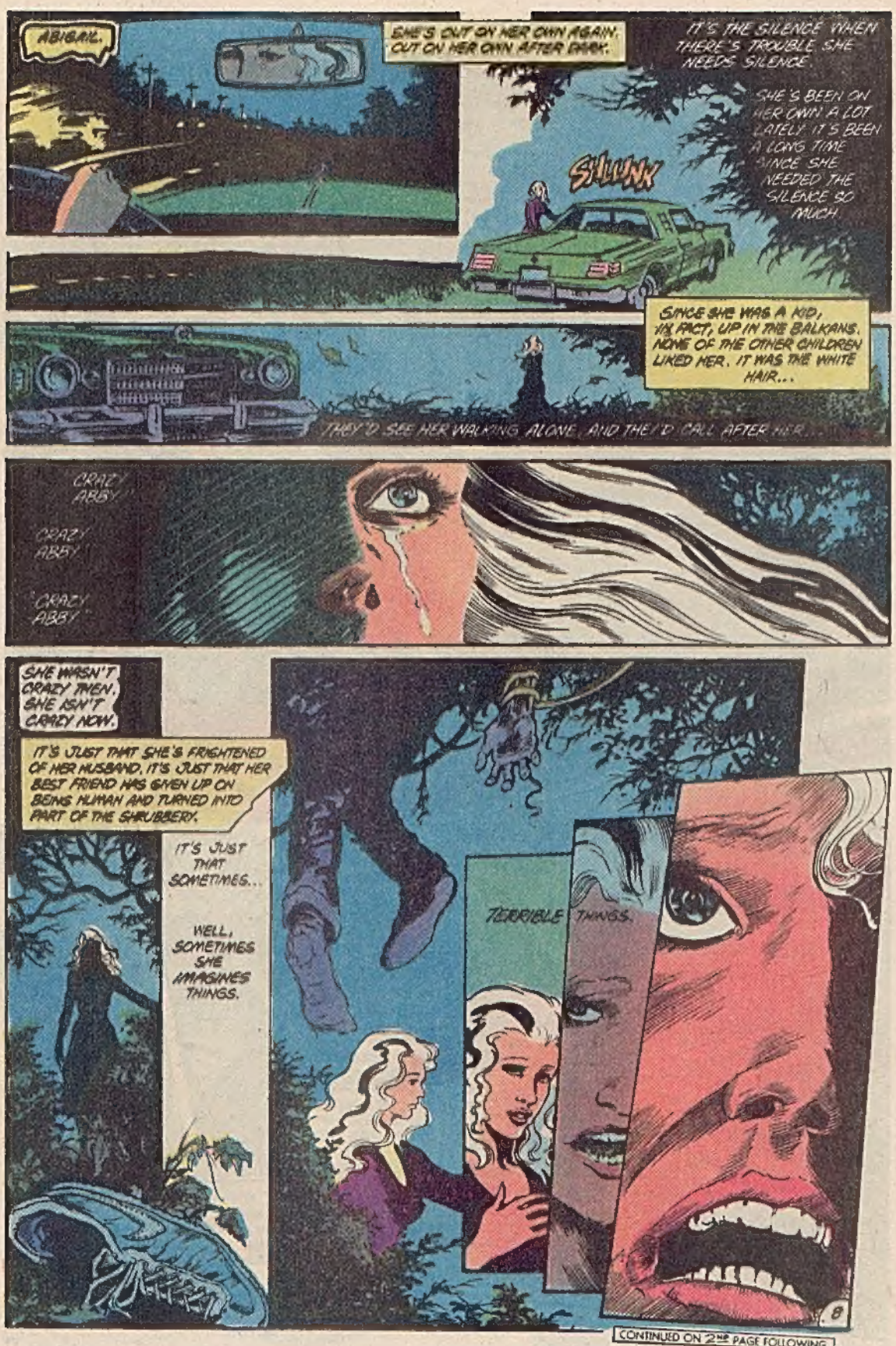
THERE!
I SAW IT AGAIN!
STUEY, YOU ARE REALLY SICK.
HEY, DUMONT! DUMONT, YOU COMATOSE BLOB OF BUTTER! STUEY JUST SAW THE JOLLY GREEN GIANT!
ISN'T THAT TOTALLY SICK?
...LEAMEALONE...
IT WASN'T THE JOLLY GREEN GIANT.
IT WAS JUST, I DUNNO, LOOKED LIKE THE GUY HAD LEAVES ON HIS HEAD OR SOMETHIN'...
I'M GONNA TAKE A LOOK.
HEY! STUEY!!
HEY, STUEY, PICK ME UP A CAN 'A MEXICORN!!
IT'S FOR MY...
...MOTHER.
4

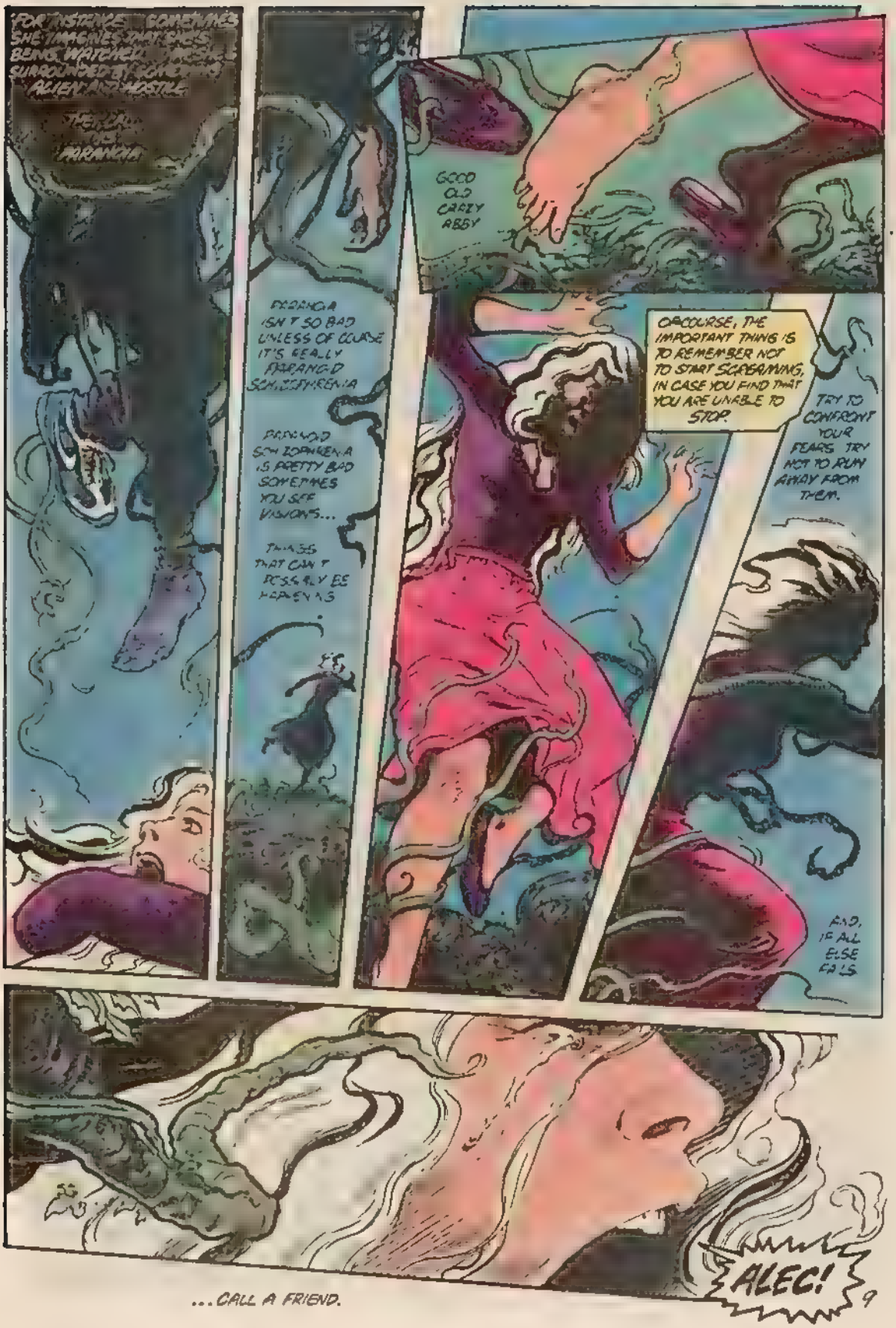
CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

OKAY, RATBREATH, YOU WIN. YOU WERE RIGHT.
NOTHIN' THERE.
UH...
ANDY?
ANDY, WHAT'S THIS STUFF ON THE CAR? THIS IS MY DAD'S CAR, MAN.
HEY, ANDY?
LUP LUP LUP
LUP LUP
LUP LUP
LUP LUP
LUP LUP LUP LUP
5

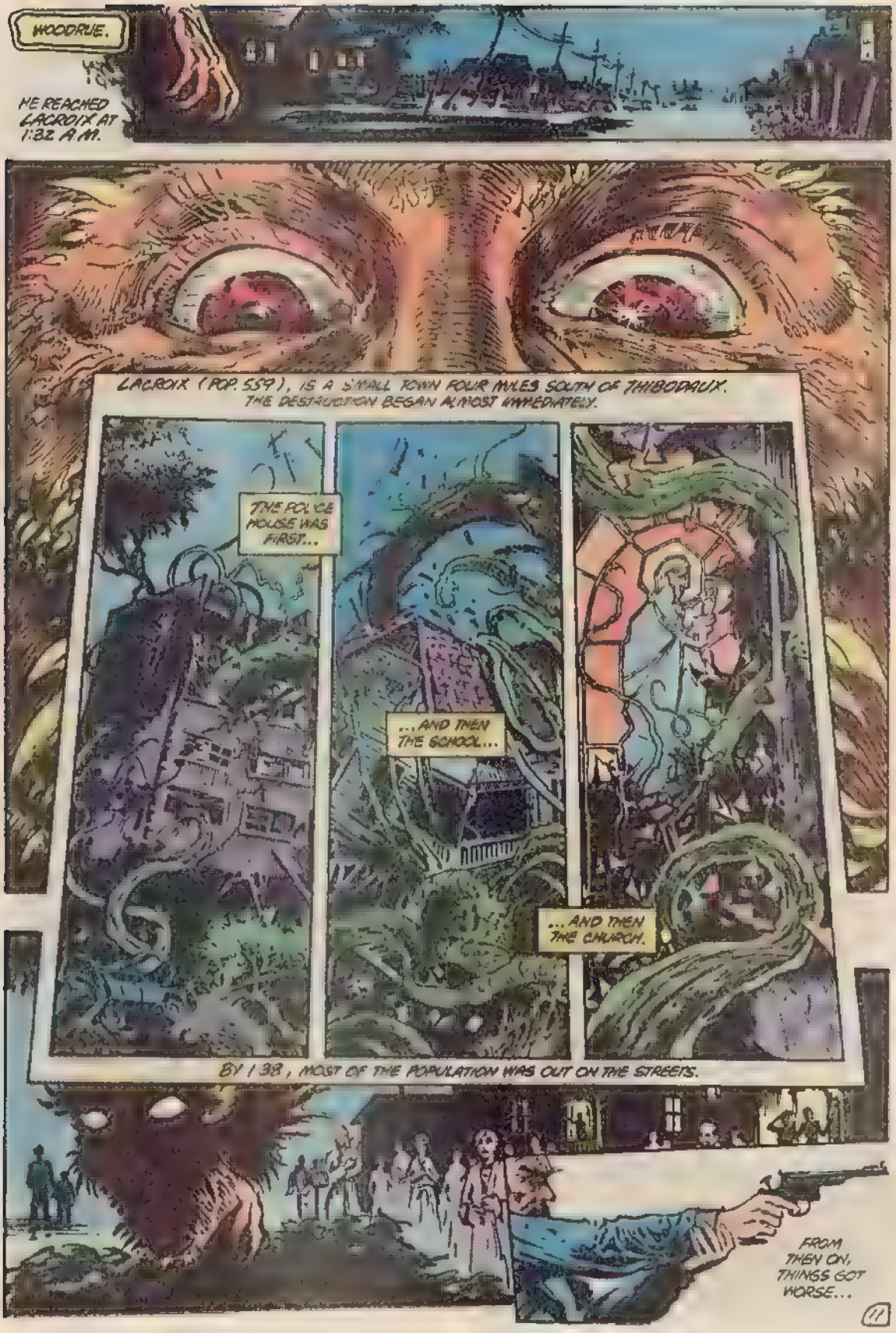
EEEE EEEE
A-HUH
A-HUH
A-HUH
A-HUH
HUH
HUH
HU--
6

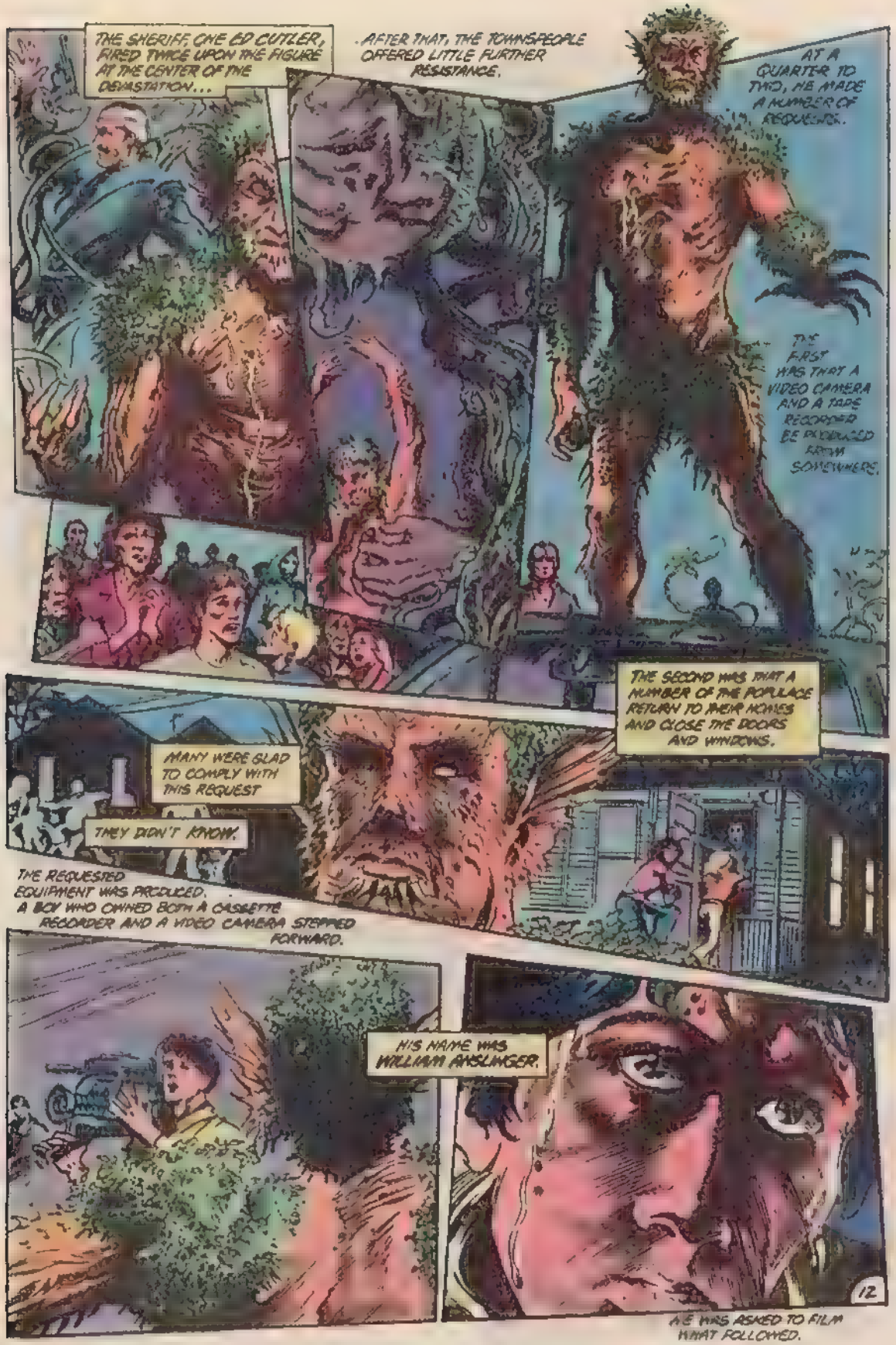

THERE... SOMETHING COLD AND UGLY, BRUSHING AGAINST ME... BLACK IMAGES CONGEALING LIKE TAR...
THERE IS THE CREAKING OF BOUGHS... AN ADIDAS SNEAKER TWIRLING IN THE HOT BREEZE...
THERE IS SOMETHING... SOMETHING THAT WALKS THE DESERTED NIGHT ROADS TOWARD THE SLEEPING TOWNS...
...SOMETHING THAT RUSTLES...
THERE IS ANOTHER MIND IN THE GREEN.
A RED MIND.
IT CRAWLS.
IT CRAWLS LIKE CANCER ...PAINTING EVERY-THING WITH THE STICKY DARKNESS OF OLD BLOOD...
I FEEL A NAME... WOOD-RUE?
WOODRUE.
WHO IS WOODRUE? DID I KNOW HIM ONCE, BACK IN THE RED WORLD?
I FOR-GET. I FORGET SO MUCH...
I REMEMBER A MAN... A MAN WHO DRANK. WHAT WAS HIS NAME? NOT WOODRUE...
HE HAD A WIFE... A BEAUTIFUL WIFE... WHITE HAIR LIKE AN AVALANCHE...
A-BI-GAIL? YES...

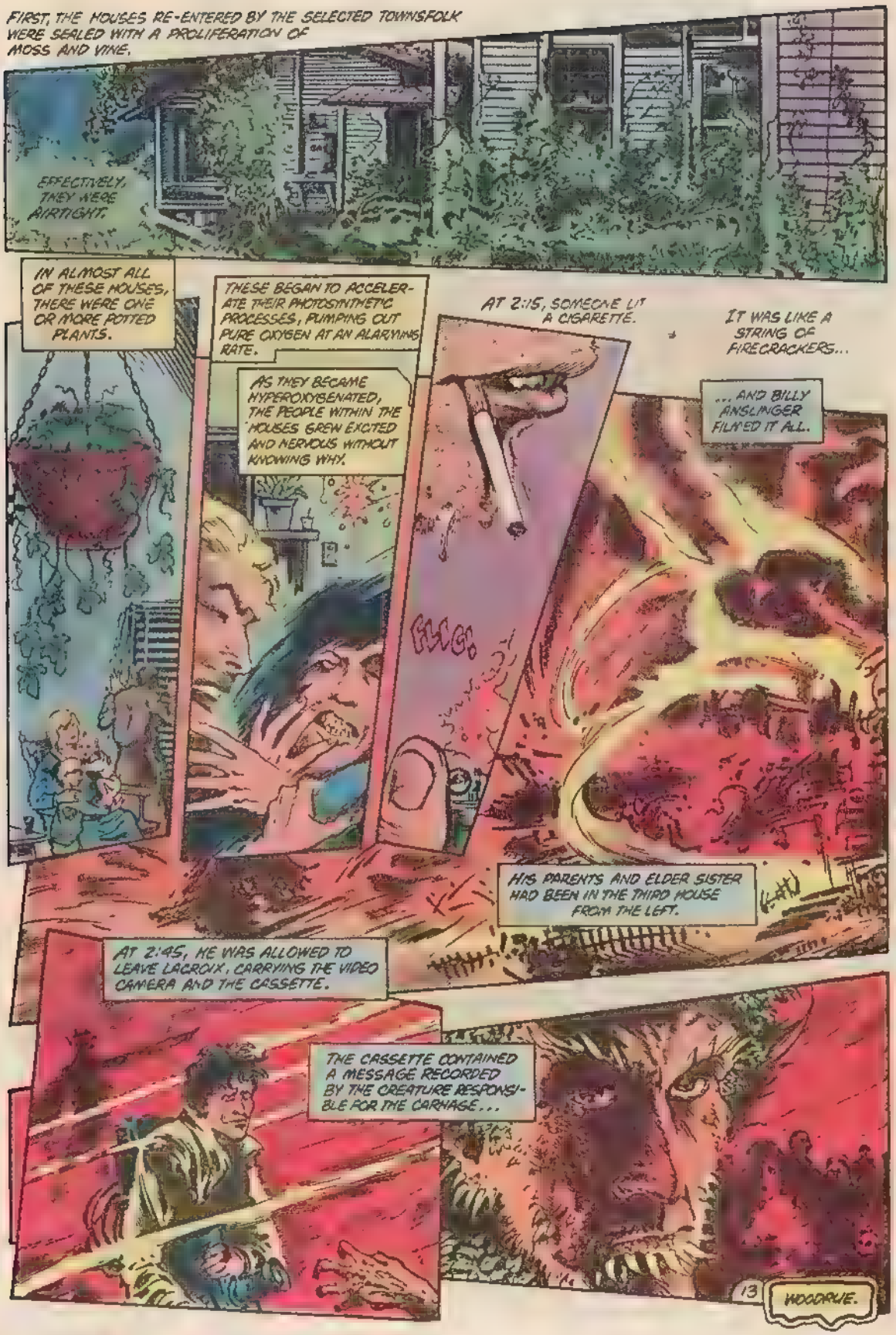

ABIGAIL.
SHE'S OUT ON HER OWN AGAIN. OUT ON HER OWN AFTER DARK.
IT'S THE SILENCE WHEN THERE'S TROUBLE. SHE NEEDS SILENCE.
SHE'S BEEN ON HER OWN A LOT LATELY. IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE SHE NEEDED THE SILENCE SO MUCH.
SHUNK
SINCE SHE WAS A KID, IN FACT, UP IN THE BALKANS. NONE OF THE OTHER CHILDREN LIKED HER. IT WAS THE WHITE HAIR...
THEY'D SEE HER WALKING ALONE AND THEY'D CALL AFTER HER...
CRAZY ABBY
CRAZY ABBY
CRAZY ABBY
SHE WASN'T CRAZY THEN. SHE ISN'T CRAZY NOW.
IT'S JUST THAT SHE'S FRIGHTENED OF HER HUSBAND. IT'S JUST THAT HER BEST FRIEND HAS GIVEN UP ON BEING HUMAN AND TURNED INTO PART OF THE SHRUBBERY.
IT'S JUST THAT SOMETIMES...
WELL, SOMETIMES SHE IMAGINES THINGS.
TERRIBLE THINGS.
8
CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

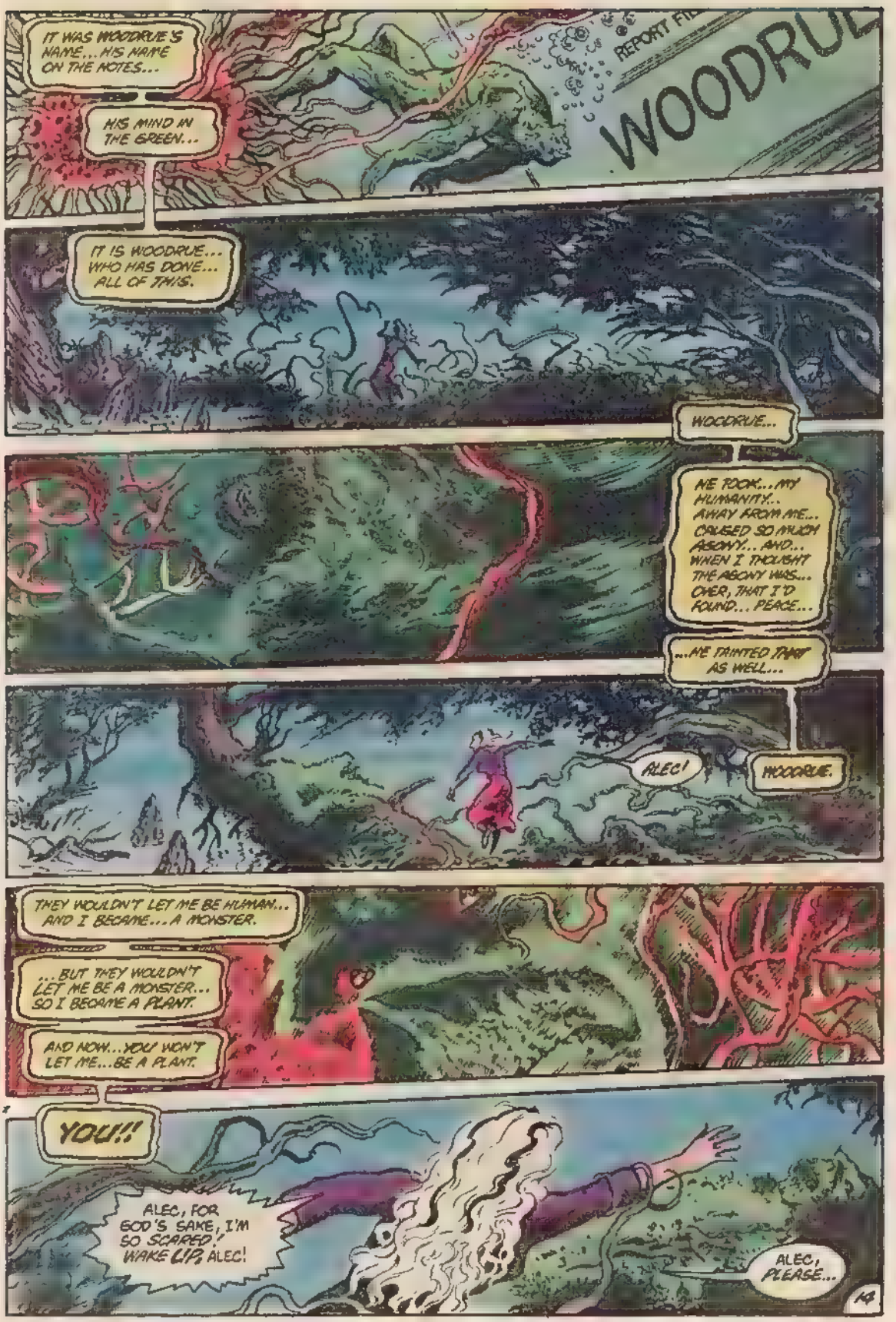

FOR INSTANCE, SOMETIMES SHE IMAGINES THAT SHE'S BEING WATCHED, SURROUNDED BY SOME ALIEN AND HOSTILE
HERE...
PARANOIA!
GOOD OLD CRAZY ABBY
PARANOIA ISN'T SO BAD UNLESS OF COURSE IT'S REALLY PARANOID SCHIZOPHRENIA
PARANOID SCHIZOPHRENIA IS PRETTY BAD SOMETIMES YOU SEE VISIONS...
THINGS THAT CAN'T POSSIBLY BE HAPPENING
OF COURSE, THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO REMEMBER NOT TO START SCREAMING, IN CASE YOU FIND THAT YOU ARE UNABLE TO STOP.
TRY TO CONFRONT YOUR FEARS. TRY NOT TO RUN AWAY FROM THEM.
AND, IF ALL ELSE FAILS
ALEC!
...CALL A FRIEND.

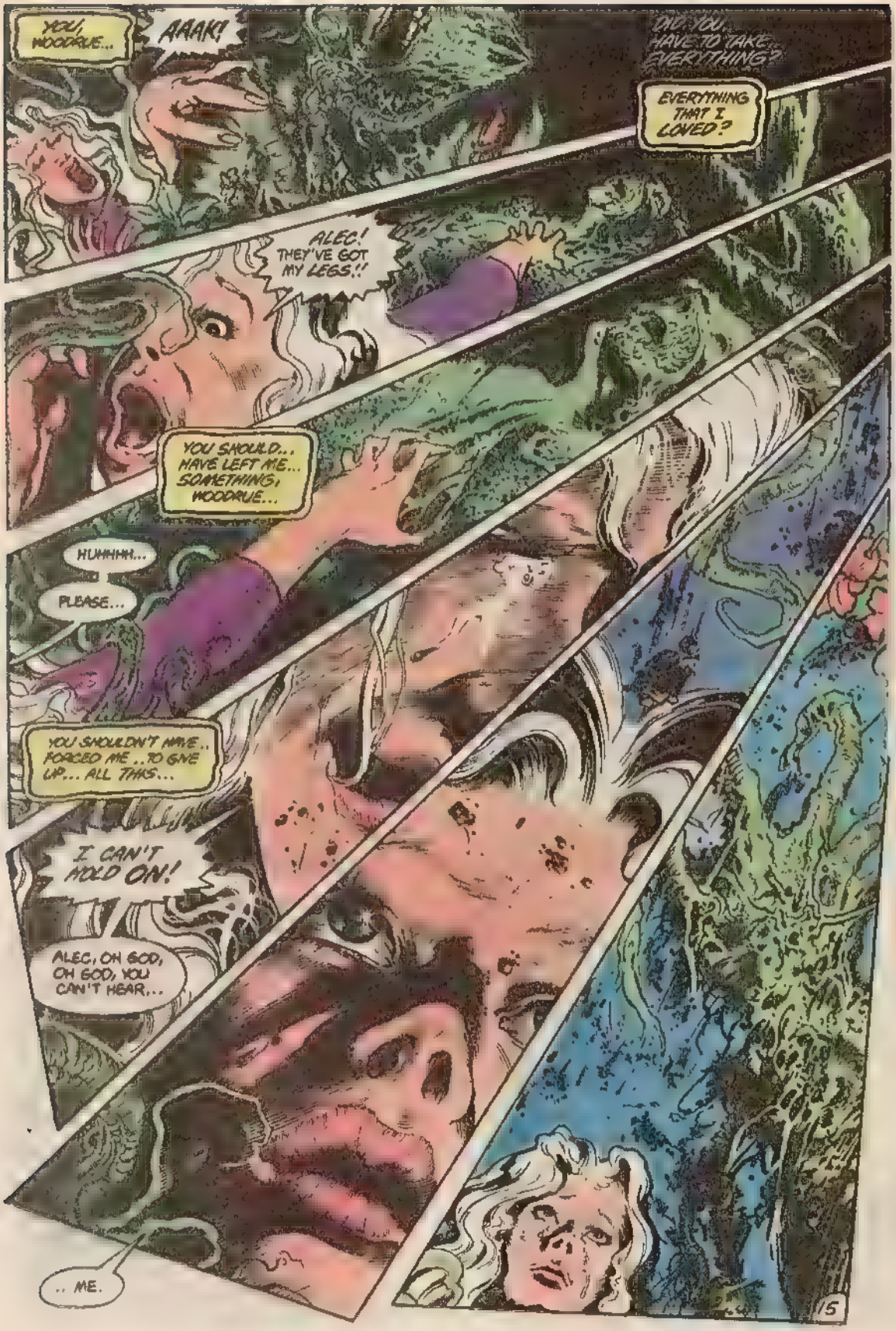
ALEC.
I KNEW AN ALEC ONCE... WAS THAT WOODRUE? ALEC WOODRUE?
NO.
ALEC.. HOLLAND! OF COURSE! AND ALEC HOLLAND...
ALEC HOLLAND. WAS ME!
NO.
NO, HE WASN'T.
THAT WAS THE TROUBLE, WASN'T IT? I THOUGHT I WAS ALEC HOLLAND, BUT I LEARNED DIFFERENTLY...
THAT'S HOW I CAME TO BE HERE.
HOW DID IT HAPPEN? I REMEMBER BEING SHOT...
...AND THEN WAKING UP, COLD AND WET, IN... THE SUNDERLAND BUILDING.
...WAS THAT THE NAME? SUNDERLAND?
I FOLLOWED THE SIGNS TO SOMEPLACE OF MAIN IMPORTANCE THERE WERE SOME NOTES THERE.
NOTES ABOUT ME AND I READ THEM. AND THEY TOLD ME EVERYTHING.
DR. JASON WOODRUE
AND THE AUTHOR'S NAME WAS...THE AUTHOR'S NAME WAS...
10


WOODRUE.
HE REACHED LACROIX AT 1:32 A.M.
LACROIX (POP. 559), IS A SMALL TOWN FOUR MILES SOUTH OF THIBODAUX. THE DESTRUCTION BEGAN ALMOST IMMEDIATELY.
THE POLICE HOUSE WAS FIRST...
...AND THEN THE SCHOOL...
...AND THEN THE CHURCH.
BY 1:38, MOST OF THE POPULATION WAS OUT ON THE STREETS.
FROM THEN ON, THINGS GOT WORSE...


THE SHERIFF, ONE ED CUTLER, FIRED TWICE UPON THE FIGURE AT THE CENTER OF THE DEVASTATION...
. AFTER THAT, THE TOWNSPEOPLE OFFERED LITTLE FURTHER RESISTANCE.
AT A QUARTER TO TWO, HE MADE A NUMBER OF REQUESTS.
THE FIRST WAS THAT A VIDEO CAMERA AND A TAPE RECORDER BE PROCURED FROM SOMEWHERE.
THE SECOND WAS THAT A NUMBER OF THE POPULACE RETURN TO THEIR HOMES AND CLOSE THE DOORS AND WINDOWS.
MANY WERE GLAD TO COMPLY WITH THIS REQUEST
THEY DIDN'T KNOW.
THE REQUESTED EQUIPMENT WAS PROCURED. A BOY WHO OWNED BOTH A CASSETTE RECORDER AND A VIDEO CAMERA STEPPED FORWARD.
HIS NAME WAS WILLIAM ANSLINGER.
12
HE WAS ASKED TO FILM WHAT FOLLOWED.


FIRST, THE HOUSES RE-ENTERED BY THE SELECTED TOWNSFOLK WERE SEALED WITH A PROLIFERATION OF MOSS AND VINE.
EFFECTIVELY, THEY WERE AIRTIGHT.
IN ALMOST ALL OF THESE HOUSES, THERE WERE ONE OR MORE POTTED PLANTS.
THESE BEGAN TO ACCELERATE THEIR PHOTOSYNTHETIC PROCESSES, PUMPING OUT PURE OXYGEN AT AN ALARMING RATE.
AS THEY BECAME HYPEROXYGENATED, THE PEOPLE WITHIN THE HOUSES GREW EXCITED AND NERVOUS WITHOUT KNOWING WHY.
AT 2:15, SOMEONE LIT A CIGARETTE.
FLG.
IT WAS LIKE A STRING OF FIRECRACKERS...
... AND BILLY ANSLINGER FILMED IT ALL.
HIS PARENTS AND ELDER SISTER HAD BEEN IN THE THIRD HOUSE FROM THE LEFT.
AT 2:45, HE WAS ALLOWED TO LEAVE LACROIX, CARRYING THE VIDEO CAMERA AND THE CASSETTE.
THE CASSETTE CONTAINED A MESSAGE RECORDED BY THE CREATURE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CARNAGE...
13
WOOORVE.


IT WAS WOODRUE'S NAME... HIS NAME ON THE NOTES...
HIS MIND IN THE GREEN...
REPORT FI
WOODRUE
IT IS WOODRUE... WHO HAS DONE... ALL OF THIS.
WOODRUE...
HE TOOK... MY HUMANITY.. AWAY FROM ME... CAUSED SO MUCH AGONY... AND... WHEN I THOUGHT THE AGONY WAS... OVER, THAT I'D FOUND... PEACE...
...HE TAINTED THAT AS WELL...
ALEC!
WOODRUE.
THEY WOULDN'T LET ME BE HUMAN... AND I BECAME... A MONSTER.
...BUT THEY WOULDN'T LET ME BE A MONSTER... SO I BECAME A PLANT.
AND NOW... YOU WON'T LET ME... BE A PLANT.
YOU!!
ALEC, FOR GOD'S SAKE, I'M SO SCARED! WAKE UP, ALEC!
ALEC, PLEASE...
42


YOU, WOODRUE...
AAAK!
DID YOU HAVE TO TAKE EVERYTHING?
EVERYTHING THAT I LOVED?
ALEC! THEY'VE GOT MY LEGS!!
YOU SHOULD... HAVE LEFT ME... SOMETHING, WOODRUE...
HUHHHH...
PLEASE...
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE.. FORCED ME ..TO GIVE UP... ALL THIS...
I CAN'T HOLD ON!
ALEC, OH GOD, OH GOD, YOU CAN'T HEAR...
.. ME.
5

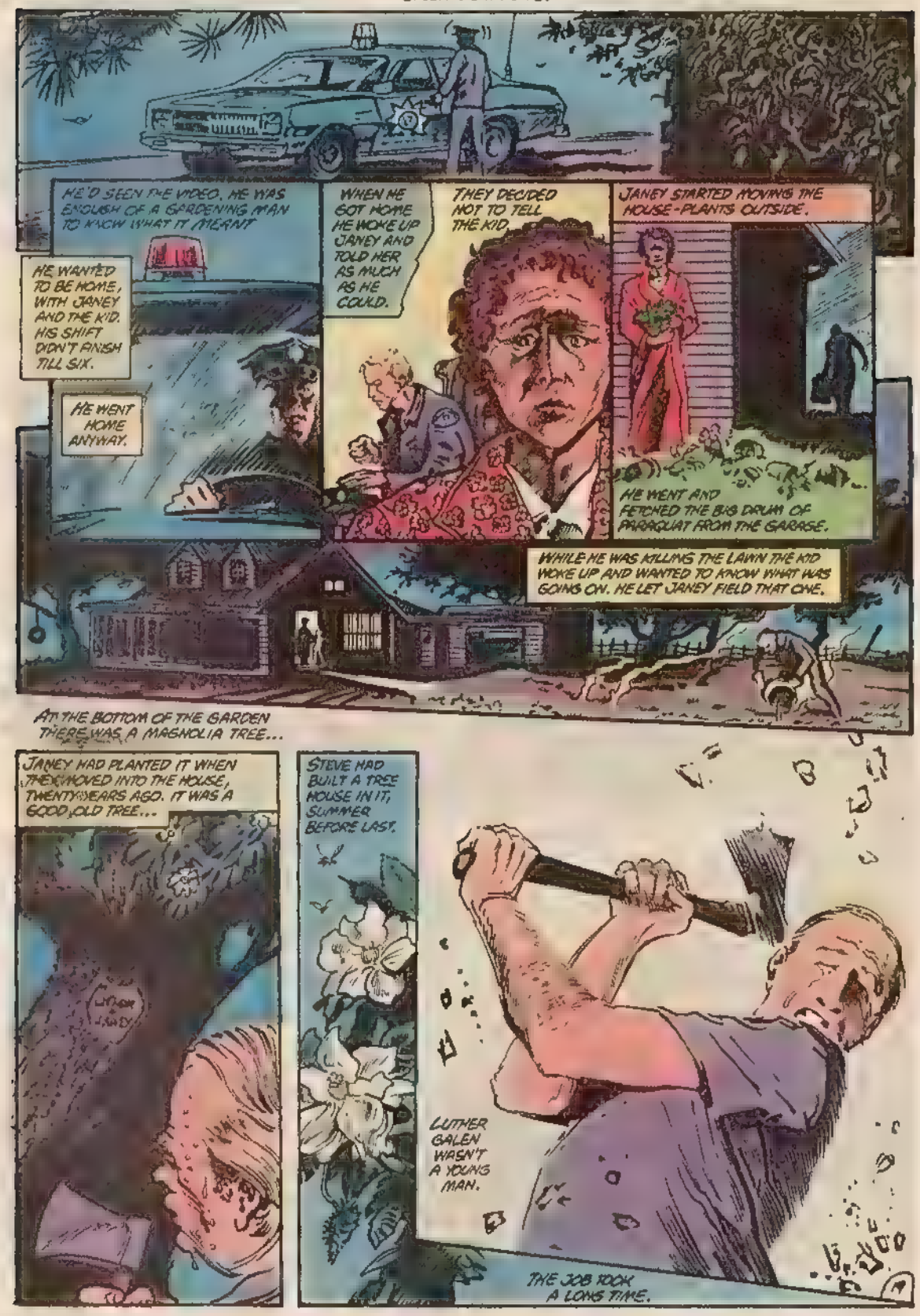
16

AND THE SWAMP THING WALKS.
AND THE WOMAN FOLLOWS.

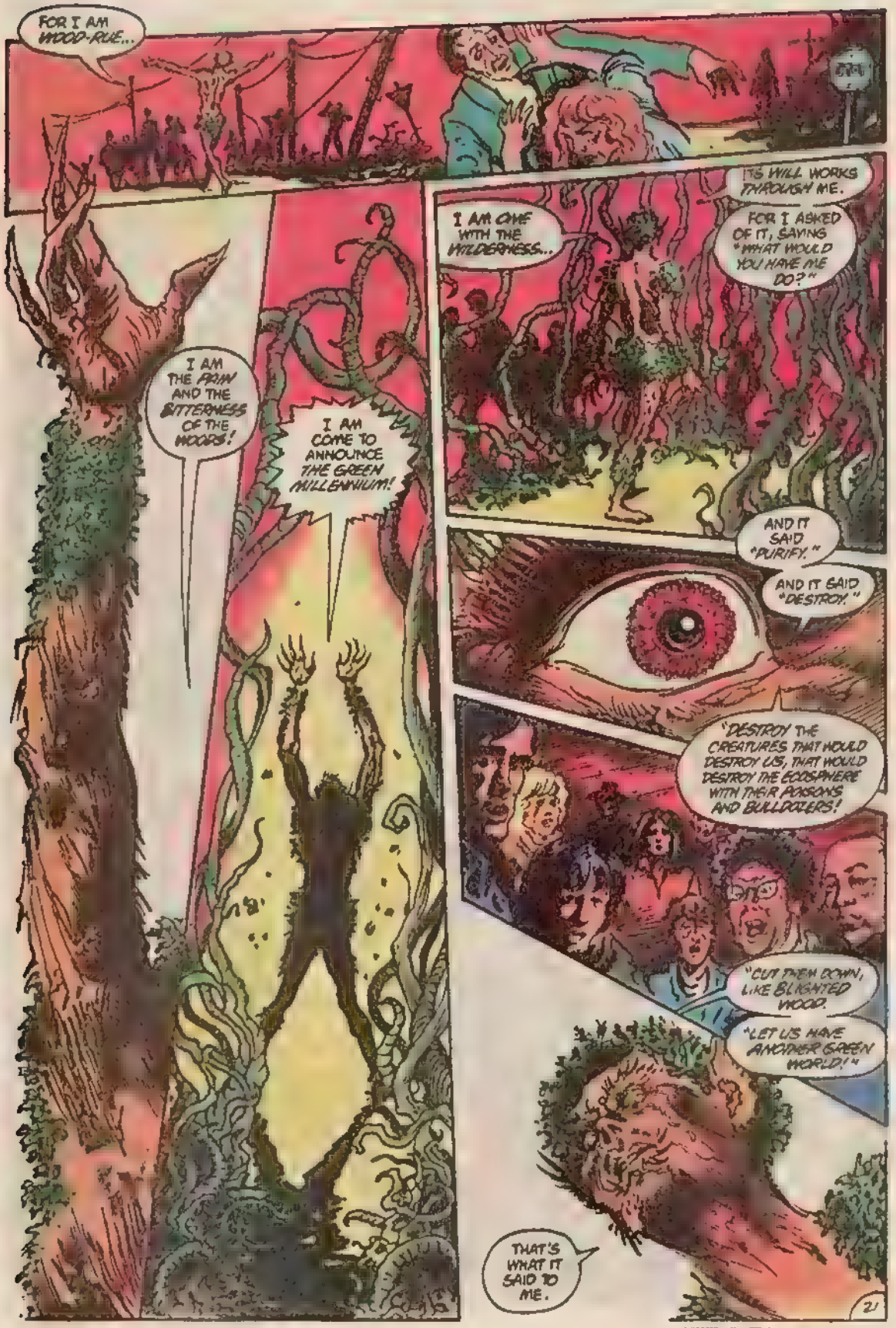
SHE DOESN'T WANT TO BE OUT ON HER OWN...

CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

. . NOT ON A NIGHT LIKE THIS.
BILLY ANSLINGER REACHED THE POLICE STATION IN CHEMILLE AT 3:36 A.M.
COUNTY COURT HOU
POLICE
CHEMILLE WAS FIVE MILES NORTH OF HOUMA. IT WASN'T A BAD TOWN.
MAP
TERREBONNE COUNTY
HOUMA
THERE WAS GREEN JUICE ALL OVER HIS SHIRT AND NO ONE COULD MAKE SENSE OF WHAT HE SAID.
HE KEPT ASKING FOR "BETH".
BETH ANSLINGER HAD BEEN HIS ELDER SISTER.
AT FOUR O'CLOCK, SGT. LUTHER GALEN DECIDED TO LISTEN TO THE TAPE THE BOY HAD BEEN CARRYING.
AT FOUR TWENTY, HE HASSLED UP THE NECESSARY EQUIPMENT AND WATCHED THE VIDEO.
THEN HE CALLED MORGAN CITY...
AND MORGAN CITY CALLED WASHINGTON...
AND WASHINGTON CALLED THE
18


AT 4:45 A.M., AFTER MAKING SURE THAT BILLY ANSLINGER WAS SAFE IN MORGAN CITY HOSPITAL, LUTHER GALEN WENT HOME.
HE'D SEEN THE VIDEO. HE WAS ENOUGH OF A GARDENING MAN TO KNOW WHAT IT MEANT
HE WANTED TO BE HOME, WITH JANEY AND THE KID. HIS SHIFT DIDN'T FINISH TILL SIX.
HE WENT HOME ANYWAY.
WHEN HE GOT HOME HE WOKE UP JANEY AND TOLD HER AS MUCH AS HE COULD.
THEY DECIDED NOT TO TELL THE KID.
JANEY STARTED MOVING THE HOUSE-PLANTS OUTSIDE.
HE WENT AND FETCHED THE BIG DRUM OF PARAQUAT FROM THE GARAGE.
WHILE HE WAS KILLING THE LAWN THE KID WOKE UP AND WANTED TO KNOW WHAT WAS GOING ON. HE LET JANEY FIELD THAT ONE.
AT THE BOTTOM OF THE GARDEN THERE WAS A MAGNOLIA TREE...
JANEY HAD PLANTED IT WHEN SHE MOVED INTO THE HOUSE, TWENTY YEARS AGO. IT WAS A GOOD, OLD TREE...
STEVE HAD BUILT A TREE HOUSE IN IT, SUMMER BEFORE LAST.
LUTHER GALEN WASN'T A YOUNG MAN.
THE JOB TOOK A LONG TIME.

IN FACT, IT SEEMED TO GO ON FOREVER.
NO MORE.
PLEASE.
STOP
NO MORE?
NO MORE?!
DID YOU SAY "NO MORE" WHEN YOU AND YOUR FELLOW HAMBURGERS WERE STRIPPING THE LAND BARE?!
WHEN THEY DIPPED THEIR CHAINSAWS INTO THE TENDER FLESH OF MY PEOPLE?
DID YOU SAY "NO MORE" THEN?!
THERE WILL BE MORE.
...UNNNNUH...
SKLASH
LOTS MORE.
20


FOR I AM WOOD-RUE...
I AM THE PAIN AND THE BITTERNESS OF THE MOORS!
I AM COME TO ANNOUNCE THE GREEN MILLENNIUM!
I AM ONE WITH THE WILDERNESS...
IT'S WILL WORKS THROUGH ME.
FOR I ASKED OF IT, SAYING "WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE ME DO?"
AND IT SAID "PURIFY."
AND IT SAID "DESTROY."
"DESTROY THE CREATURES THAT WOULD DESTROY US, THAT WOULD DESTROY THE ECOSPHERE WITH THEIR POISONS AND BULLDOZERS!
"CUT THEM DOWN, LIKE BLIGHTED WOOD.
"LET US HAVE ANOTHER GREEN WORLD!"
THAT'S WHAT IT SAID TO ME.
21
CONTINUED IN 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

"ANOTHER GREEN WORLD, AS THERE WAS AT THE BEGINNING, BEFORE THE BEASTS CRAWLED UP OUT OF THE OCEANS...
"THOSE LONG, GREEN CENTURIES...
"... WHERE NO BIRD SANG...
"...WHERE NO DOG BARKED..."
WHERE THERE WAS NO NOISE!
WHERE THERE WAS NO SCREAMING MEAT!!
FOR I AM THE REGRET AND ANGER OF THE FORESTS...
I...
ANGIE!
WOODRUE...

NEXT:

ROOT

DC Comics Inc.
666 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10103

Jenette Kahn, President and Publisher
Dick Giordano, Vice Pres.-Executive Editor
Len Wein, Editor
Tom Condon, Managing Editor
Pat Bastienne, Editorial Coordinator
Bob Rozakis, Production Manager
Joe Orlando, Vice Pres.-Editorial Director
Paul Levitz, Vice Pres.-Operations
Bruce Bristow, Marketing Director
Arthur Gutowitz, Treasurer

Dear Editor,

Who is Stephen R. Bissette?

He is magnificent! His drawing is a wild, phantasmagorical blend of Berni Wrightson, Tom Yeates, and especially Basil Wolverton! Those delirium tremens visions with disembodied brains and floating eyes reminded me of the best of Wolverton's work in the old Atlas line or in MISTER MYSTERY during the 1950s.

His chilling rendition of Arcane and the fantastic Un-Men excited me greatly. I am intrigued to discover how he escaped that debacle in the cemetery some years ago.

I enjoy this periodical immensely and hope it will not suffer the same fate of DC's two other preternatural mystery comics canceled this year, NIGHT FORCE and HOUSE OF MYSTERY. *In pace requiescat!*

As to a Phantom Stranger title, I swiftly reply affirmatively! Also, resurrect the Spectre title!

In closing, I'd like to register a complaint. Who is this "T.M. Maple"? Is it necessary that he write under an alias? I intend to complain to the editors of several titles about this! Aliases for simple letters vex me. I've seen letters signed recently with such appellations as "The Sisters Wu," "T.M. Maple," and "CK" and am beginning to wish comic companies would refuse to publish letters written under an alias as most newspapers of stature do!

"NIETZSCHE"
alias JEFF WARREN
Rt. 2 Box 121
McMinnville, TN 37110

They seek him here, they seek him there, they seek this Maple everywhere. Although the Sisters Wu are certainly real enough, I can only surmise that "CK" is Cap'n Kangaroo. As for the Mad Maple, fear not. I never print his letters.—Joey

Dear Len, Marty, and Stephen,

The first thing I did when I picked #17 off the newsstand was to flip to the first page and look at the indicia at the bottom of that page. Well, I know I'm strange, but am I *that* strange? This once, I think I can be forgiven, since after going Swamp Thingless last month I wanted to see if the words "Published monthly" were still there. They were. (Whew!) So, it was merely a case of a skipped issue (a DC rarity) and now we're back on track. Just to go on record: I think I prefer to have a month skipped (though with advance notice) rather than have a hasty, substandard fill-in issue put into the gap.

I don't know if there's a heck of a lot I can say about the story, since it was mainly a set-up type of tale, but I'll give it a try. First, it was good to see Cable back and to have this current series tied in a little more with the past series. Cable is truly a sorry picture, more scary in some ways than the monsters that haunt him. It is interesting that you brought in electro-shock treatment, as well as alcohol, as a cause of his current condition. In North America such misuse of psychiatric treatment is largely the tragic result of mistakes of confusion, but in many totalitarian countries such methods are used as a matter of course on "enemies of the state." That Sunderland would use such tactics is entirely believable and nonetheless chilling. And speaking of monsters, the depiction of them this issue was particularly effective. Kudos to whoever designed them. The most chilling of all was Arcane him(?)self—though I think this is as much for his mental and emotional deformation as for his physical appearance.

Lastly, I'd like to just mention that I hope the current team can be held together for a while. Am I dreaming?

T.M. MAPLE
Toronto, Ontario

Yeah, you're dreaming, but it's a dream of sheer bliss if you consider that SWAMP THING is now scripted by Alan Moore. In fact, that should be good for a couple of sleepless nights, as well. By the way, Len will correct me if I'm wrong, but those creatures were designed by Stephen Bissette. You had to be here to see the preliminary drawings. Enough to make a grown man quiver. And once more: this book is healthy, *hear? Let's hear no more "bi-monthly" or "cancelation" talk!—Joey*

Dear Marty, Stephen, and John,

DEVELOPMENTS!!!

That's the one word that best describes the current story line in SOTST. "And Things that Go Bump in the Night" in Swampy #17 exemplified this to the fullest. Having recently just been turned on to the SWAMP THING, I have tracked down as many of the old/new SWAMP THING series books as possible. (I'm literally "swamp-ed" with back issues.)

But back to issue #17!

We're treated to a beautifully rendered Yeates/Bissette cover illustration that simply sets the mood for the delectables within. What a shock to learn that that kneeling figure is none other than Matt Cable!

The linear quality and creative composition in the artwork were magnificent! Pages 10 and 14 show some pretty incredible techniques! What medium did you guys use to get those soft, subtle tones?

More developments are revealed concerning the exhuming of Linda's body, Cable's dealings with Wicker, and then the shocking disappearance of Arcane!! This is a great story line, Marty, and your writing has a very consistent flow that does indeed enhance the artwork.

My prediction: Linda's body contains the remnants of the bio-restorative formula...

JOHN BACH
565 Amherst Lane
Hoffman Estates, IL 60195

The medium Steve and John use is Madame Rhonda, a woman from the old country with a cunning way with ectoplasm.—Joey

Dear Editors,

I feel I must send you this note regarding the graphic genius behind SOTST #17.

The beautiful fine-precision designs and inking bring to mind the great fantasy illustrator Virgil Finlay. This is combined with the intense and obsessed weirdness of such artists as Francis Bacon or even Ralph Steadman. An inspired combo!

The layouts and coloring are damn near the best I've ever witnessed in the comic book medium. A truly amazing book. Congratulations on achieving excellence in a field so often overcrowded with sloppy, uncaring hack work.

T. CALDWELL
Box 562
Wyandotte, MI 48192

Thanks for the high praise, T. By the way, that "comic book medium" you refer to is Madame Rhonda, a woman from the old country...—Joey

Dear Len, Marty, Stephen, and John,

Let me congratulate you on the wonderful job you've been doing with the resurrection of the SWAMP THING. At first, I was hesitant to build up my hopes. Issues rolled by, and they seemed to be getting better and better. Sure, the writing was good, and so was the art, but I found myself wondering how long it would take for the book to lose

direction again. The first ten issues of the original comic were wonderful, and even after those the book showed promise, but bit by bit the story bogged down and the credits kept changing. The original series ended, and the *SWAMP THING* faded to guest appearances.

Now a new book: After the finale of the first story, I was quite pleased. Then I heard Yeates was leaving and it seemed that Alec was doomed to the same fate. Nevertheless, I waited, and who should show up? Steve Bissette, one of the best artists in the field, particularly for horror comics. Gentlemen, I urge you to keep this line-up. John's inks have adapted well to Steve's unusual style and the current story line is wonderful.

In issue #17, both Abby and Matt returned! And then the disappearance of Linda's body and the connection between Dennis and Matt! Incredible! But that's not all! On page 20 I wondered who that mysterious figure could possibly be, and I hoped it would be Arcane, Alec's most horrifying foe to date. It was! Now I am in SWAMP THING heaven!

You guys have taken SWAMP THING and actually made it better than the original Wein/Wrightson collaborations, something which, until now, I would have thought impossible. I'm overjoyed to see Len editing the book. You guys have succeeded in bringing together all the loose threads, tying them into one extremely involved and wonderful story. I'm glad to see someone finally bringing the book up to its full potential. Keep doing it, guys! It's great!

DAVE (Arcane fanatic) GOYER
2847 Aurora
Ann Arbor, MI 48105

Glad you got a big kick out of issue 17, Dave. Your enthusiasm will fire future issues, that's for sure. And hey, if you think Arcane is "the most horrifying foe to date," you should see him at a party, when he really...Yow! Sorry, Len!—Joey

Dear Marty,

I sometimes eat while reading a comic book (people munch in theaters, right?) and made the attempt during "...And Things that Go Bump in the Night" (SOTST #17). But the splash page—with the title framed by little boogers eating each other—totally ruined my appetite. If a comic book can affect me that way, it must be good, I figure.

You also did a good job on the lettercol. Letters chosen were honest, orderly, and opinionated. Your replies were logical and did not dodge issues. But since about half the letters page dwelt on the Phantom Stranger, isn't it clear that readers respond to PS stories? I don't know how large the Stranger market is, but if you're looking for buyers of PS tales, count me in.

ART VIDRO
34 North Court
Roslyn Heights, NY 11577

I'll have to admit that Bissette and Totleben give new meaning to the phrase "splash page," huh? How about a little cover warning to make sure readers don't peruse SOTST and eat simultaneously? As for the Phantom Stranger...—Joey

Dear Marty,

Concerning the Phantom Stranger's fate, I hereby cast my vote for him to receive his own mag. As a matter of fact, I *demand* he receive his own mag!

DONAVON R. ICE, JR.
R.D. 4 Cedar Manor
Elizabethtown, PA 17022

Dear Mr. Wein,

RE: A new Phantom Stranger book.

Consider me officially clamoring. (Is Jim Aparo too busy?) Thank you.

JOHN HENRY SAIN
5659 McLoughlin Drive
Central Point, OR 97502

The Stranger may be a phantom but there's nothing phantasmal about his fans! More on this another time, 'cause it's time for me to fade!—Joey Cavalieri

DON'T MISS THE
NEXT EXCITING ISSUE...

...ON SALE FEBRUARY 16th!!